THE MINISTER OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (e) No, Sir. A proposal to declare Kakinada-Pondicherry canals (Buckingham canal, Commamur canal, Eluru canal and Kakinada canal) along with rivers Godavari and Krishna (1095 km) as a National Waterway is under consideration. Regarding Buckingham canal, a navigational channel of 32 meter bottom width and 1.8 meter depth is to be developed with 5 terminals. The development cost of the proposed National Waterway is estimated to be Rs. 542 crore and the timeframe envisaged thereof is 7 years. Under approved 10th Plan outlay, provision of Rs. 24 crore has been made for new waterways, out of which this waterway may also be funded after due approval.

Upgradation of Belgaum-Goa Highway

1894. SHRI SHANTARAM LAXMAN NAIK: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to upgrade and widen Belgaum-Goa highway;

(b) if so, the specifications of the proposed widening/upgradation;

(c) the cost of the project involved; and

(d) the proposed date of completion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) and (b) Belgaum-Goa/Karnataka border section of Belgaum to Panaji Highway (NH-4A) and its remaining section from Goa/Karnataka border to Panaji are proposed for upgradation under National Highway Development Project (NHDP) IIIA and IIIB respectively on Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis. Since four laning of this National Highway is not found viable on BOT basis, presently it is proposed to improve it to two lane road with paved shoulders.

(c) and (d) At present, the work of preparation of Detailed Project Report (DPR) is in progress and, therefore, it is too early to indicate the cost as well as date of completion of the project at this stage.

Development of NHs in North-Eastern Region

1895. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the names and length of the existing National Highway in the North-Eastern Region;

(b) which of these roads are taken up/would be taken up for development during the financial years 2005-06 and 2006-07;

(c) the names of the roads under construction for more than three years; and

(d) the plan to expedite these works?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SHIPPING, ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI K.H. MUNIAPPA): (a) The names and length of existing National Highways in the North Eastern Region are given in Statement-I (*See* below).

(b) Development projects are proposed to be taken up during 2005-06 and 2006-07 on the stretches of NH 31C, 31, 36, 37 and 54 under East-West Corridor of National Highway Development Programme-II (NHDP-II) through National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) and on the stretches of NH 31A, 36, 37, 39, 40, 44, 51, 52, 53, 54, 61, 152, 153 and 154 under Phase A of Special Accelerated Road Development Programme (SARDP-NE) through NHAI, Border Roads Organization (BRO) and State Public Works Departments of Assam. Works of widening/ strengthening, improvement of riding quality, construction/reconstruction of bridges etc. are also proposed to be taken up on the various National Highways entrusted to the BRO and the respective State PWDs under Annual Plans 2005-06 and 2006-07, based on need, inter-se priority of works and availability of funds.

(c) Details of the works sanctioned by the Ministry on various stretches of National Highways in the North Eastern Region under Plan works up to March, 2003 and presently in progress are given in Statement-II (*See* below).